ABSTRACT

A "pause and resume" function and a "channel change" function for recording and playing interframe compressed audiovideo data, particularly MPEG data. The invention includes a digital track format and a method for recording one or more sessions from one or more streams of interframe compressed audiovideo data which has been synchronized to a reference clock. The invention adds special "splice point" indicators to recorded video material. The splice point indicators are added either periodically (*e.g.*, by recording a special reference clock) or when a discontinuity occurs in recording audiovideo data streams. Splice point indicators are used to determine the existence of a point of discontinuity in the recorded audiovideo data. The system and method enable pausing and later resuming recording of an audiovideo data stream such that the audiovideo data can be played back with proper resynchronization at each point of discontinuity (the "pause and resume" function). The format and method also allow for recording an abrupt change from one audiovideo data stream to a different audiovideo data stream having a different clock reference, such that the two recorded sequences are spliced together as one continuous recorded sequence that can be played back with resynchronization of the program audiovideo data at each splice point (the "channel change" function). As a consequence of using an added special reference clock as a splice point indicator, the invention also provides random access playback. In addition, the invention permits recording of conventional data in standard storage formats.